8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

595 It is a point very keenly debated as to how far polyandry was prevalent among the Nāyars in olden days. During the last fifty years no trace of such a system has been found. It is to a certain extent true that there is extreme instability of marriage relationship among the commoner folk even now. But for a woman to have more than one husband at a time *seems to have been against the moral ideas of the community even two hundred years ago.*[1] Nāyar ballads and poetry of that age contain many passages where polyandry is spoken of as a barbarous and unknown custom.

[538]

But though strict polyandry does not seem to have existed at any time, traces of a *system of supplementary spouses*, very much like the Piraura custom among the Australians, exist even now. In the *Enangar* or allied families, which we have noticed before, any woman of the same generation and in the same relationship as cross-cousin is eligible for marriage, and even if she is married, the young man whose spouse she might have been has certain rights—not distinctly conjugal, but still pertaining to it. He is the one who avenges her against insults. Her children call him "little father," and he has the right of entering any part of her apartments. Among the commoner folk a system of conjugal relationship may still exist. It is practically certain that this is a survival of the system of *supplementary spouses* such as we have in Australia and other places.

[613] [621] [582]

562 In this connection it may be interesting to notice the general position of women in Nāyar society. On *a priori* grounds we are inclined to assume that the position of women in matrilineal communities is higher than in patrilineal societies of the same standard of culture. How strongly this opinion is held will be seen from the fact that even in other parts of South India Malabar is spoken of as the "Land where women rule." It is impossible to make a general statement as to the relative status of women in matrilineal and patrilineal communities. But as far as the Nāyars are concerned, their women enjoy equality with men. They can hold property in their own right and enter the professions they choose. Traditions of scholarship and art are, perhaps, stronger among them than among men. Some of the best Malayalam poets and scholars have been Nāyar women, and at the present day the statistics of female education show a higher percentage of English-educated girls among them than among any other Indian community. All the girls' schools in Travancore are manned by them, and some of them hold such high administrative posts as inspectorships of girls' schools.

[871] [875]

595 562 Polygamy was indeed prevalent, and is still legally permitted among the Nāyars. But this, in my opinion, does not show an inferiority of status. Though the opinion of Nāyar women would strongly be against the wife of the Akikuyu chieftain who told Mrs. Routledge that she would like her husband to have as many wives as possible,[2] there is no reason to believe that the possession of more than one wife

[1] See Note 3 at the end. Appendix on "McLennan and the Nair Type of Polyandry."
[2] Among a Prehistoric People (Akikuyu).

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *kāraṇavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *tāvazhi* (*tā*=mother, *vazhi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

India urban participation rate, in case of rural participation rate, the difference is almost 8 per cent.

11.12 As a general rule the difference between rural and urban participation rates is about 6 to 7 per cent. In Kerala, however, this difference narrows down to 1.3 per cent. This is primarily due to an abnormally low rural participation rate, the causes for which are analyzed below.

11.13 It was mentioned earlier that the population of Kerala has a very high proportion of females and that this is particularly marked in the working age group. Since the proportion of females taking part in economic activity is generally less than that of males, this difference being particularly marked in Kerala (Table 57), it naturally tends to pull down the participation rates.

11.14 The participation rate in the lower ranges of age is very much influenced by the proportion of school-going children. It is well known that the standards of primary education in Kerala are the highest in the whole of India. About 18 per cent of population attends schools and colleges against only 8.31 per cent in the whole of India. This is an important factor in reducing the rural participation rate.

11.15 The size of working force is also a function of the opportunities available for work. The agricultural sector of Kerala is highly over-populated, the size of average holdings being only 1.5 acres (all-India 7.5 acres). Moreover, due to the predominance of perennial crops, cropping pattern in Kerala is much less labour-intensive than in the other parts of India.[1] That the agricultural sector of Kerala is comparatively less labour-absorbing is confirmed by the very low participation rate in the agricultural sector of Kerala in comparison to the non-agricultural sector. (Table 57). These are some of the factors limiting the scope for gainful employment in the rural areas.

Past Trend

11.16 The table below gives an indication of the trend of the general participation rate as indicated from the last three Census operations:

TREND IN PARTICIPATION RATE—1931, 1941 AND 1951

	Population Density	*Participation Rates*[a] (In per cent)	*Total Population* (In lakhs)
1931	634	48.0	95.2
1941	737	36.6	110.37
1951	905	36.1	135.6

[a]These figures have to be used with reservations since the concepts in successive Censuses were different. However, suitable modifications have been made to make them broadly comparable.

N.B.: Population density and population figures are for Kerala, while participation rate figures are only for Travancore-Cochin.

[1] Chapter on Agriculture and Plantations.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll

some of the concepts used. Working force has already been defined as comprising all those persons who take part in gainful economic activity. Labour force, on the other hand, includes all those members of the population who are already engaged in gainful activity and those who are willing to take up work, generally at the current level of wages. The difference between labour force and the working force gives the magnitude of those who are unemployed and are actively seeking work.

11.24 Although these concepts are quite clear, according to definitions, their application in the context of a backward economy like that of Kerala is fraught with difficulties, which are by now quite well known. The seasonal and non-institutionalized nature of economic activity over a wide sphere of the economy creates problems in the way of precise quantification of unemployment. Statistical accuracy of the figures discussed below is naturally subject to these limitations.

11.25 The main source of information on this subject is the survey of unemployment for Travancore-Cochin and Malabar region carried out by the Statistics Department of the State. The survey was carried out in 1954-55 for the Travancore-Cochin region and in 1956-57 for Malabar. In the absence of figures for the same year, the combined results for the two different years are taken, by and large, to be representative of the situation as it existed during 1955-56.

11.26 Table 60 gives the combined results of the two surveys. According to concepts used in the survey, the total population has been divided into eight activity groups given in column I of Table 60. Persons falling in category 4, 6, 7, that is, (*i*) those having regular employment (*ii*) casual workers and (*iii*) the people in search of employment, make up the labour force. Category (7) includes the unemployed persons. The under-employed section of the population is covered by category (6), i.e., the casual workers.

11.27 According to this survey, labour force as a proportion of total population comes to 32.5 per cent (all-India: 42.2%[1]). The difference between labour force—population ratio as worked out from this survey and that revealed by the NSS for all-India is primarily due to a difference in the concepts used. The Unemployment Survey of Kerala does not include those below 15 years in the labour force. This assumption is quite justified in the case of a State like Kerala where most of the children go to school. In 1955-56, 14.1 lakh children were registered on the rolls of primary schools. These form about 22 per cent of all the children below 15 years of age. Roughly the same proportion of children below 15 years belong to the labour force in the whole of India (according to the NSS Report). It may, therefore, be concluded that there are only stray cases of children below 15 years belonging to the labour force in Kerala.

11.28 Another way of working out the ratio between the labour force and the total population in the State is to calculate the working force on the basis of Census data and to add to it the number of unemployed persons as obtained from the Unemployment Survey in Kerala. On the basis of the participation rate of 33.5 per cent, working force during 1956 comes out to 50.3 lakh persons[2]. The number of

[1] National Sample Survey: *Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[2] The manner of working out the working force for 1956 is explained in Appendix I to Chapter 1.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

approximations can be made regarding the number of persons unemployed in rural and urban areas.

11.33 There is reason to believe that the high incidence of open unemployment in Kerala is primarily due to high rural unemployment. The two basic reasons for this premise, viz., the very small size of holdings and predominance of perennial crops have already been explained. This conclusion is also corroborated by evidence from some other sources. During 1956 the number of unemployed persons registered with the Employment Exchanges was 38,988 persons.[1] A majority of those registering themselves with the Employment Exchanges generally come from the urban areas. It is believed that roughly 25 per cent[2] of the unemployed persons get themselves registered with the Employment Exchanges in India. In Kerala, the standard of literacy being very high, it may be assumed that a higher proportion (40%) of the unemployed get themselves registered. On this basis the total number of unemployed persons in urban areas would be about 0.95 lakhs. Out of the total unemployed population of 6.6 lakhs, about 5.65 lakhs must, therefore, be residents of rural areas. On the basis of these calculations, rural-urban distribution of the unemployed and the labour force for 1956 is given in the table below:

DISTRIBUTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

(In Million)

	Rural	*Urban*	*Total*
1. Population	12.9 (86%)	2.10 (14.0%)	15 0 (100%)
2. Working Force	4.34	.68	5.02
3. Unemployed	0.565	.095	.66
4. Unemployed as Percentage of Population	0.44	.45	.44
5. Labour Force (2+3)	4.905	.775	5.68
6. Labour Force as Percentage of Population	3.80	3.69	3.786

11.34 It may thus be seen that unlike the rest of India the percentage of unemployed population in rural areas is not markedly less than that in the urban areas. In both areas it works out to about 4.5 per cent.

Educational Standards of the Unemployed

11.35 Analysis of educational attainments of the unemployed population can be helpful in throwing light on the qualitative aspects of the unemployed. The impression one generally gets about Kerala is that unemployment is more severe among the educated persons. The results of the Kerala Unemployment Survey do not exactly bear out this contention. Only 6.8 per cent of those unemployed had been educated upto school leaving (SSLC) standard. The extent of technical education was even lower, only 2.5 per cent of the unemployed having received any form of technical education. It would thus appear that although a fairly large proportion of the unemployed may be literate, not many of them are educated, if ESLC is taken to be the minimum requirement for being defined as an educated person.

[1] *Basic Statistics—Kerala*, published by the State Department of Statistics.

[2] *NSS—Preliminary Report on Urban Unemployment* Sept. 1953.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

3. THE PEOPLE

The new State is one of the most densely populated in the whole of India, as well as one in which the percentage of literacy is highest. Unfortunately no current statistics are available, as Kerala is of very recent creation, but some idea can be gained from the fact that in the Ponani taluk of the former district of Malabar, according to the Madras Government Statistical Atlas, 1935, there were 626,500 inhabitants, or 1,471 per square mile. The rate of increase of the population is also very rapid: about 11% every ten years. The percentage of education is highest in Travancore, Cochin. In 1951, 53.8% were reported literate (*Census of India*, Vol. xii).

The people of Kerala are a very complex collection and it would be hopeless to attempt to give a full and detailed description of them. The reader is referred to those works on the subject which have already been published, the titles of some of which can be found in the Bibliography. In order to understand, however, the extraordinary way in which Kerala society is partitioned into a number of individual groups, and how each of these has its own particular customs and ways, as for instance polyandry, it is essential to give a general idea of the different castes and subcastes which compose the population, with a brief outline of their social organization and professional occupations.

Rather naturally, as is to be expected from the mythological version of the origins of the country mentioned above, the summit of the hierarchy is occupied by the *Nambudri Brahmin*. As W. Logan very aptly puts it in his *Malabar* (Madras, 1887): "His person is holy; his directions command, his movements are a procession; his meals nectar; he is the holiest of human beings, the representative of God on earth." (p. 127). There are eight subdivisions to the caste, some more holy than others, by reason of the occupations which they pursue. Other Brahmins in Malabar, who have come from outside and are thus somewhat looked down upon, are the Pattars, Embrandiris, Tamil and Konkani Brahmins.

Below this exalted strata of Kerala society come the *Ambalavasis* or temple attendants, of whom there exist roughly nine subdivisions. With them are to be classed the self-styled *Kshattriyas* and the *Samantans*, from whose ranks are drawn the flower of the former military aristocracy. The Malayalam maharajas and rajas all belong to this class, as does the family of the Zamorin of Calicut.

In immediate succession are the *Nayars*, Sudras by caste, descendants of those easterners whom Parasu Raman brought in for the protection

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

but then this influence made itself felt rather by conversions and personal dealings than by any direct, government action, as now.

Transport, which in Kerala had always been difficult, was also greatly changed. Modern facilities, such as good roads, ferries, bridges; later, motor cars, railways, engine-driven ships, boats and launches; and finally, aeroplanes, have put thousands of boatmen and cartmen out of work and have not only brought formerly isolated and inaccessible parts of the country into contact with the rest, but have also made important centres become within easy and rapid reach of each other. As in other parts of the world where it is impossible for race distinctions to be observed in a system of general transport, caste is overlooked in public transport in Kerala, and this fact has greatly contributed to breaking down traditional socio-religious pre-occupations in such matters.

With the institution of a regular method of dispensing justice through courts, caste was dealt a further blow; the European masters of India refused to treat individuals otherwise than as equals before the law. The judiciary personnel was recruited from all sections of the population, regardless of caste or creed. This measure, together with the new way in which government servants were enlisted, gave the more enlightened castes of Nayars and Tiyas their chance. The present eminence in public affairs which these two communities have attained is in a large measure due to the opportunities thus thrown open to them.

Education, of course, also had a lot to do with it. Instead of the old kind in which village teachers taught native lore and traditions in an unchanging, ageless fashion, European-type schools were opened and modern means of education became available to all who wished to take advantage of them. These methods may be criticised today, since independance in 1947, as being un-Indian and useless in the context of the national culture, but the fact remains that they brought great changes in the outlook of the people, especially among the middle classes, who have indisputably benefitted from them.

Liberal, learned professions began to be followed by many to whom such careers were not open before, and again, regardless of caste distinctions, lawyers, doctors and teachers appeared in large numbers in Kerala. Many of them soon travelled to other parts of India, where their reputation as able and knowledgeable practitioners has never ceased to grow. A large part of the Government of India's New Delhi office personnel is made up of men from Kerala, in both high and subordinate positions, especially Nayars, so much so, indeed, that the fact has become the subject of a standing joke.

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613 near the house, round which he makes three pradakshinams, pouring water from a kindi round the foot of the tree as he does so. The procession then returns to the house, and on the way an old woman of the family proclaims the baby's name aloud for the first time in the form of a question, asking it 'Krishnan' (for instance), 'dost thou see the sky?' In some cases, the father simply calls out the name twice.

852 "The Vidyarambham ceremony to celebrate the
871 beginning of the child's education takes place in the fifth
[778] or seventh year. In some places, the child is first taken to the temple, where some water sanctified by mantrams is poured over his head by the Shântikâran (officiating priest). The ceremony at the house is opened by Ganapathi pûja performed by an Ezhuttacchan, or by a
[782] Nambûdri, or another Nâyar. The Ezhuttacchan writes on the child's tongue with a gold fanam (coin) the invocation to Ganapathi (Hari Sri Ganapathayi nama), or sometimes the fifty-one letters of the Malayalam alphabet, and then grasps the middle finger of the child's right hand, and with it traces the same letters in parched rice. He also gives the child an ola (strip of palm leaf) inscribed with them, and receives in return a small fee
[875] in cash. Next the child thrice touches first the
[576] Ezhuttacchan's feet, and then his own forehead with his right hand, in token of that reverent submission to the teacher, which seems to have been the key-note of the old Hindu system of education.

304 "The Kâthukuttu or ear-boring is performed either at the same time as the Pâla-kudi or the Choulam, or at any time in the fifth or seventh year. The operator, who may be any one possessing the necessary skill, pierces first the right and then the left ear with two gold or silver wires brought by the goldsmith, or with karamullu

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Savings are not invested in industrial undertakings, there being no openings for the same. 454

On the question of rural indebtedness, its causes and extent, much can be written. There has been, I am told, an enormous increase in indebtedness among all classes. Nearly 75 per cent are in debt, especially so the poor agriculturists. The great proportion of small landholders and agricultural workers, the want of diversity of industry and occupation, the rise in the price of commodities, the high usurious interest which a few take for money advanced, the substitution of money for kind in taxes, the high cost of education, lower and higher, to which Brahmans resort now-a-days, the high value which people set on Government service, however small the pay, all these are working, some generally and others in particular cases, to cause and perpetuate rural indebtedness. Co-operative credit societies could do much to help the people out of it. I may also mention that litigation is also responsible. For every paltry difference resort is had to the Munsif's or the Magistrate's Court, as there are no other means of settling such differences. There are nearly twenty-five vakils or pleaders in the Munsif's Court alone who cast nets to earn something by favouring the litigious spirit. Among the Brahmans the 'dowry system' is working some mischief. Every girl has to be given in marriage before her twelfth year and the bridegroom demands a good round sum. Social reformers condemn the system. A redeeming feature of it, viz., that that sum is a substantial help to the bridegroom's costly higher English education is not wholly to be forgotten; and no Brahman stops his education until thrown out by the University or money ceases to be forthcoming. 426 [691] [582] [871]

The proportion of debtors who have liberated themselves from debt may be estimated at nearly a fourth.

Communal village life is unknown in the 'village.' The Brahmans in the 'town' try to revive a 'Samooham' (gathering) but with no success so far. There is no communal property. Separate individual life is the order. The local Muhammadans and Christians keep up a kind of unity within their 'castes' because of their religion and Church. The Hindu temples in the village are managed by the State Government. For every slight improvement in the village the people have to approach the Government. For example, the local tank has been in ruins for the last three or four years; the Government of course helps the people, but the tank is not yet repaired because of official delay and when it is actually done, as was done once a few years back, the contractor earns a good round sum as profit and the work is not properly carried out. 621 653

Temples and festivals.—The annual religious festival in the local temple at Watakanchery town which lasts for five days is conducted by the Government. Rs. 128 and 128 paras of paddy (24 cwt.) are spent; a contractor bids for the sum and he conducts the festival. 796

The people of the village themselves conduct an annual religious festival at a temple nearly three miles to the north by collecting subscriptions. They spend nearly Rs. 300 on the occasion. It is pleasant to witness a procession in Malabar. So many elephants are ornamented and made to stand in array. The number of elephants depends upon the depth of the purse. Drum-beaters

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562 women can speak to other caste people, male or female, without breach of decorum. Purdah is observed among the Nambudri Brahman women.

312 Every house contains a well from which water is taken for drinking and domestic purposes. Water is specially good in the village since the ground forms a good filter. Wells are generally not very deep. Few people boil the water before drinking. Generally a raised mound is erected round the well to keep bad water out; nevertheless, during the rainy season water from the compounds runs to the wells with the result that the wells get extremely muddy, but the water is used without compunction by the people. Tank water is used only for bathing.

•871 *Education.*—There are only three schools in the whole village, one for boys which has this year (1916) been raised to a high school, a Church school for Christian boys, and a vernacular school for girls up to the primary standard. The high school is a spacious building recently constructed at a cost of nearly Rs. 20,000. There is a prescribed code of study, and pupils are prepared for the School Final Examination which is conducted by the State. Brahman girls never attend the school after the age of 12. But all of them learn now to read and write the vernacular which is Malayalam in these parts, though the language the Brahmans use in their houses is Tamil, with an intonation markedly changed from the Tamil in the eastern parts. I subjoin below the strength of the respective classes in the high school and the girls' primary school. The Church school is maintained by the Christians in their church for their exclusive use. It is classed as a primary school.

Sirkar High School, Watakancheri.

	Hindus.			Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.
	Brahmans.	Nayars.	Other castes.			
Form IV	17	7	3	...	1	28
,, III (*a*)	9	7	3	...	2	21
,, ,, (*b*)	10	9	3	...	3	25
,, II (*a*)	13	11	1	...	3	28
,, ,, (*b*)	8	17	12	...	2	39
,, I (*a*)	11	7	4	...	2	24
,, ,, (*b*)	10	9	3	...	2	24
Standard IV (*a*)	7	10	4	1	2	24
,, ,, (*b*)	10	7	5	...	1	23
,, III (*a*)	10	20	6	1	1	38
,, ,, (*b*)	16	12	6	3	2	39
,, II (*a*)	6	10	9	...	6	31
,, ,, (*b*)	7	15	7	...	3	32
,, I (*a*)	16	16	2	...	3	37
,, ,, (*b*) ...	11	11	6	2	4	34
Infants (*a*)	9	13	8	4	6	40
,, (*b*) ...	9	18	6	1	6	40
Total ...	179	189	88	12	49	527

Note.—The Muhammadans are very backward in point of education. So too the lower castes of Hindus.

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Sirkar Girls' Primary Vernacular School.

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	Hindus.			Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.
	Brahmans.	Nayars.	Other castes.			
Standard IV	1	10	2	...	...	13
" III	10	3	2	..	5	20
" II (*a*)	14	6	1	...	1	22
" (*b*)	7	6	1	...	10	24
" I (*a*)	15	10	6	...	3	34
" (*b*)	2	19	2	...	13	36
Total ...	49	54	14	...	32	149

Nearly 75 per cent of the adults know how to read and write the vernacular, but those who know how to read and write English may be about 2 per cent. There are no pandits worth the name, nor specially educated persons, except the Nambudri Brahmans who study Sanskrit and the Vedas, but they are extremely exclusive and never mix with any people high or low. Their manners and customs would form an interesting study by themselves. [191]

The number of boys (of girls there is not one single instance) who have advanced to more advanced schools elsewhere are only a few. What with the poverty of the people and what with the rigour of the examinations only a few, perhaps fifty, in the place have been able to reach the Matriculation standard, and of these only 7 have been able to graduate, of whom two are B.L.'s. One is studying for medicine as an Hospital Assistant.

The school expenses are usually met by the students' fathers, and in the case of Nayars, uncles. But a father's purse, as I pointed out already, is not very deep. Of the seven graduates mentioned only three were able, with difficulty, to meet the high costs of modern education. The remaining four were assisted by their wives' dowries or by their fathers-in-law.

The choice of career for a candidate who has passed his Matriculation or Secondary School-leaving Certificate is very limited. Most of them engage themselves in the Government service for salaries sometimes as low as Rs. 9 per mensem, but more often Rs. 12 or Rs. 15 to start with, as clerks, teachers in the lower standards, etc. No one sees any other opening so sure and so lasting. In my judgment the modern literary education which stops with the Secondary School-leaving Certificate is not of much use. The student's energy is damped when he enters the world with his Secondary School-leaving Certificate, at least that is my experience in my village. But it is good perhaps that education is becoming less and less useful as an opening to lucrative employment; but the authorities also, in my humble opinion, should change the character of education or so modify it as to make it less literary and more technical, so that an anxious father may not look forward in vain to his son getting into some employment however mean or undignified. [873]

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873 Of the two B.L.'s I mentioned, one is the District Magistrate in the State, another is a Pleader; of the graduates one is in the Government service in British India on a pay of Rs. 35, and the rest are still continuing their further studies.

871 Except the Royal Readers and text-books which pupils buy for 217 their school course there are not very many good English books in the village. A few of us have tried to start a reading-room and library for the English-reading public, but it is only a beginning. But good Malayalam books are common.

No description of village-education would be complete without noting those silent yet effective forces of culture which make a Hindu home what it is, so sweet, so hospitable, and so pious.

545 The village is often visited by a troupe of 'players' who put on the stage Puranic stories in the form of pantomimes and *natakas* or dramas. The celebrated Malabar pantomime is known as *Kathakali*. A big landlord, or ruling chief, forms a troupe of players and sends them abroad, just after the rainy season is over. This troupe comes to a village, and a well-to-do and influential man in the village is expected to make arrangements for a performance. The expenses of the troupe for that day together with a small donation, which seldom exceeds Rs. 10, are to be paid by that person, and the villagers can witness the performance free of charge. The reputation of the man who has started the troupe, generally a big zamindar or a ruling chief, goes a long way in canvassing persons willing to meet the expenses of the play in a village. Sometimes the pantomime takes place in the local temple and the *devaswom* authorities are bound to meet the daily expenses of the players. This troupe travels from place to place and returns at the end of the season to the place from which it started and the members engage themselves in their respective occupations, generally agriculture, or as servants to the landlord who formed the troupe. The same round is repeated in the next season.

538 There are also various ways of teaching broadcast the Puranic lore such as *chakiyar kooth, ottam thullal*, etc.

In a *chakiyar kooth*, the *chakiyar* recites certain Sanskrit *slokas* illustrative of stories from the Puranas and interprets them with wit and humour in such an excellent fashion that there will not be one in the audience who does not stretch his sides with laughter. In an *ottam thullal*, the person recites with appropriate gestures verses composed in short Malayalam metre dealing with Puranic stories. These are usually performed on the occasion of festivals in temples.

The above institutions are indigenous to Malabar. Among the Tamil Brahmans, a travelling *Sastrigal* often visits a village and reads Puranic stories in Sanskrit in the local temple and interprets them in Tamil so that the men and women in the village may understand them. At the time of his departure a decent sum is subscribed and paid to him.

In every decent home, a member of the family reads stories from the Puranas to the other inmates in the vernacular. All the people listen with rapt attention and sometimes engage in a lively discussion. Tamil Brahman ladies usually learn by heart Puranic stories in the shape of songs which they recite every

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the brother or son, in the case of a Nayar the sister's son succeeds. The Travancore and Cochin royal families and the Zamorin family descend in the female line. 428

Water-supply.—Drinking water is supplied by the wells. Every house has one. The sinking of wells is easy here since the soil is loose and there is no rock and the height above the sea level is not much. Wealthy people build the well with granite, others leave it with mud banks. The labourers dig their wells themselves as it involves only two days' work. The wells never dry up. There are three public wells and two temple wells besides. Indeed the scarcity of water is not felt at all. But for bathing purposes the water in the tank is bad, and some people use well-water for the same. The quality of the well-water is fairly good. 312

Education.—There are seven schools of which one is a secondary school managed by the Taluk Board, one is a Government Girls' School and the other five are elementary schools, one being Muhammadan. There are 680 boys and 185 girls in attendance. 871

The education imparted is fairly satisfactory, special stress being laid on the vernacular. According to the educational curriculum prescribed by the Director, the geography of the district, a little Indian History, a good training in the vernacular, a little Arithmetic, and the beginning of English by teaching the alphabet and small words, are all taught in the school.

Eighty per cent of the men and fifteen per cent of the women can read and write the vernacular; about two per cent can read and write English, and somewhat fewer speak it. [212] [191]

Forty boys have left the village and had a college course, and there is one girl matriculate.

About 20 boys after undergoing a little commercial training at Calicut have gone to Bombay and other commercial centres for employment.

It may here be mentioned that emigration to Ceylon is frequent. Emigrants return after three or four years, and remain in the village for one year, and again go to Ceylon. Nearly 150 have gone within recent years. 167

The only library in the village is the secondary school library which contains nearly 200 books, all juvenile. Five or six private persons possess some books. Some are lawyers and their books are connected with law. Others have only novels. Nobody takes study seriously. Nobody is interested in Science as a subject. This lack of enthusiasm for knowledge makes the Indian less original and less artistic. I know nobody in my village who has designed new arts or invented anything at all. This lack is everywhere visible in India and seen even among students who do not care to know anything more than those things which are prescribed for the examination. This fundamental weakness must be shamefully confessed, but there are signs of change in the right direction. 217 517

Village administration.—The head of the village is the *adhigari* or the village munsif. He is the representative of the King-Emperor. He collects the revenue, looks after the affairs of the village, has the jurisdiction over minor civil and criminal cases, controls the roads, Government lands and trees and other public places—in fact he represents every function, in a greater or lesser degree, of the King-Emperor, and is the guardian of the public peace. He must 622

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165

Peringode.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Swelling.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Skin blotches.	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	5	...	1	...	4	...	3	1	...
„ 10 „ 20 ...	...	...	...	...	...	3	1	...	...
„ 20 „ 30 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
„ 30 „ 40 „	4	...	1	...	2	...	...	...	...
„ 40 „ 50 ...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
„ 50 „ 60 ...	2	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
„ 60 „ 80 ...	5	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Total ...	30	...	3	4	6	3	4	1	5

Mathur.

Ages of dead.	Number of dead according to ages.	Dysentery.	Diarrhœa.	Hysteria.	Tuberculosis.	Rheumatism.
Below 1	2	...	1	1	...	...
Between 30 and 40	1	...	...	...	1	...
„ 50 „ 60	3	1	1	...	...	1
„ 60 „ above ...	5	...	5	...	...	...
Total ...	11	1	7	1	1	1

871

Education.—There is one elementary school in the amsam, but it is situated in Peringode desam. It is maintained by a wealthy jenmi of Peringode, who is not an enlightened man. It was started two years ago. It has a good building and sufficient accommodation for the children now on the roll. There were a large number at the commencement of the school when there were enthusiastic teachers who knew the value of education. But they were dispensed with as they soon got into the bad books of the jenmi by their independent attitude. Since then there has been a regular decline in attendance. The maximum limit reached was 210. But now the number on the roll is 103—84 boys and 19 girls. The school is now under weak hands and highly mismanaged. The masters are not efficient and their methods of teaching antiquated. They are themselves people whose knowledge is highly limited. Reading and writing the vernacular, simple rules of arithmetic, and geography are taught.

212 191 Five per cent of the adults are able to read the vernacular; four per cent to write it. There are only two people able to read, write and speak English, two brothers.

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own most of the cultivable land in the village. This family draws an income of rather more than 10,000 paras of paddy from the village, husking it in the village and using it to feed a vast household of Nambudri priests and students, and maintain a choultry. It employs a Sanskrit pandit, whose time, as the demand for Sanskrit teaching diminishes, is partly taken up with the recital to the young students of Puranic stories to which the unseen ladies of the household listen eagerly.

Water-supply.—The water-supply is abundant and is obtained from deep wells and tanks. Water from deep wells alone is used for drinking purposes. Owing to the rocky nature of the subsoil some wells are dry in summer. Each house has one or more wells; it costs about Rs. 20 to bore an ordinary deep well. The quality of well water is excellent and is an asset to the village. All people bathe every day in tanks, sometimes both in the morning and evening, especially Brahmans. The villagers are personally very clean and tidy.

Education.—One elementary school, started (very recently) and managed by the philanthropic Nambudri landlord of the place, gives free instruction to boys and girls of all castes up to the fifth standard. The school has two tiled buildings, one having an area of 72 by 20 feet, inside, and a verandah of the same length which is 9 feet broad, and the other having an area of 15 by 18 feet. Both are well ventilated and well situated and have a good appearance. There is a small flower garden in front. The school is provided with the necessary furniture, maps, and pictures, and is as far as it goes one of the best equipped of such schools. It teaches reading, writing and arithmetic, music, drawing and gardening. About the practical, as distinct from the cultural value of this education, one must say (like the Scotchman) "I have my doots." There are now no less than 5 "qualified" teachers; how one wishes that "qualified" meant much more than it does mean in educational language! They are so ill-paid (Rs. 7 to 15 per month) that it is hopeless to expect more capable men to be forthcoming or to take real interest in the work of the school. As it is, I know that at least one master is interested in the work. One hundred and twenty-six boys and 42 girls, I am informed, attend the school more or less regularly. These are drawn from all classes, except the very lowest like Cherumas and Paraiyas. The vast majority however are caste Hindus—all the girls are—and come from the Nayar and Brahman families. One could wish for greater regularity in their attendance. But they complain of having work to do at home, in assisting their parents, or they are sometimes too hungry to attend school. They are as a rule too poor to buy their own books or slates and these have to be provided by the school. Numerous prizes of books, slates, etc., are given by liberal villagers and the manager every year, to encourage the pupils to persist and to attract others. The school is steadily growing.

The average duration of school life is about four years. Many students leave before that period owing to the necessity of working for their livelihood.

About 18 per cent of the adults can read the vernacular. This

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includes hardly any females. Some 12 per cent can write the vernacular. Nearly one per cent can talk and read and write English. There are some ten pandits or others who have made a special study of grammar, logic and rhetoric, medicine, astronomy and astrology, all according to Sanskrit works. Two are able Sanskrit scholars, both Brahmans. All the Brahman scholars—some four in all—are well versed in Vedic lore. But no one cares nowadays for such learning, and in consequence their scholarship is miserably inadequately rewarded. They have given up the idea of bringing up their sons in their own fashion and instead send them to English schools. There is one boy in Madras in the Presidency College and some eight others in colleges in Calicut and Palghat, reading in the High School or college classes.

Most of the Brahman boys proceed to advanced schools; there are about ten such now. No Brahman girls proceed to higher schools. But with the advent of an elementary school in the village, they attend that. Formerly they learnt at home or in pial schools with boys. Social difficulties stand in the way of their advanced study. Non-Brahman boys also now go in small numbers to advanced schools. They number not more than a dozen, and none of them has reached a high standard.

One or two of the more advanced students get scholarships covering the school fees; all of them manage with great difficulty to defray their expenses, by borrowing money at high rates of interest, by starting what are called "Kuris," i.e., loans which are paid back by instalments; by selling any property they possess, etc. There is no one in the village who can easily maintain his son at school. Fathers, however, spend their all on their sons' education, hoping that they will get remunerative employment afterwards.

A few boys from the village who have passed through secondary schools have obtained small jobs; none has a good situation. Poorly paid schoolmasters, railway employees and clerks make up the list of the small number of such persons—not more than a dozen. It is more and more difficult for persons who have not got high educational qualifications to get suitable employment. Boys of the village who have received a secondary education and cannot proceed further complain of getting no satisfactory work and having to stay at home or return to their old occupations, which they have very likely neglected and forgotten during their school life. So farmers complain that such education is no good to their sons and we can say nothing in reply, unless we can guarantee situations for the educated. "What is the use of all this fine education," they ask, "if it does not procure a living and makes the boys unfit for what work they know? We would much rather keep them at home to stick to that work and earn a living." How can one urge the cultural and other benefits of education in the face of this practical argument? The quality and kind of education must be improved, made more practical and a better preparation for life.

There are some private libraries of Sanskrit books and palm-leaf manuscripts with the pandits numbering perhaps some 500 in all. The school has a little library where magazines (in the vernacular) and books (English and vernacular) to the number of about 100 are kept. Some of the more advanced students—there are only two or three—have small libraries of English books,